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## Cicadas

Cicadas, often referred to as jar flies, are fascinating insects with unique life cycles and behaviors. Here's a deep dive into their habitats, life cycles, and mating rituals:

### ### Habitats

Cicadas are found in a variety of environments, primarily in temperate to tropical regions. They thrive in forests, grasslands, and even deserts. In North America, cicadas are commonly seen in the eastern United States during the summer and early fall.

### ### Life Cycles

Cicadas have a complex life cycle that includes three main stages: egg, nymph, and adult.

1. **\*\*Egg Stage\*\***: Female cicadas lay their eggs in woody plant tissues. After about six to eight weeks, the eggs hatch, and the nymphs fall to the ground and burrow into the soil.

2. **\*\*Nymph Stage\*\***: Nymphs live underground for several years, feeding on the sap from plant roots. Depending on the species, this stage can last from two to seventeen years.

3. **\*\*Adult Stage\*\***: When ready, nymphs emerge from the ground, molt into their adult form, and begin their brief adult life, which lasts about four to six weeks. During this time, they mate and lay eggs, starting the cycle anew.

### ### Mating Rituals

Cicadas are known for their loud mating calls, produced by males to attract females. These calls are made by vibrating membranes called tymbals located on the sides of their abdomens.

- **\*\*Courtship Songs\*\***: Male cicadas gather in large numbers and create a loud chorus to attract females. Each species has a distinct song, which

helps females identify and locate males of the same species.

- **Physical Displays**: In addition to their songs, some cicadas engage in physical displays to attract mates. This can include wing movements and other behaviors designed to catch the female's attention.

Cicadas are truly remarkable insects with a life cycle and mating rituals that are both complex and captivating.